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ABSTRACT

This document is written for public school administrators who are interested in establishirg in their schools a competency-based, inservice teacher education program. Project CLASS (Coordinated Learning Activities for School Staff) has initiated a series of guidebooks to assist schools in setting up such a program. In this project, an alliance between a public school system and a teacher training institution is suggested. It is also proposed that generic competencies be developed sc skills that ought to be cultivated in teachers may be agreed upon. The emphasis of this project is on field training on the job for teachers. This guidebook for the administrator of such a project covers the following topics: (1) a rationale for public school involvement in Project CLASS activities; (2) rationale for public school teachers choosing to be involved in Project CLASS activities; (3) importance of attitude in the participating school system; (4) conducting a needs assessment; (5) establishing competencies and irdicators; (6) providing necessary staff and financial resources; and (7) suggested time line for activities, personnel, and incurred costs. (JD)

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ADOPTION GUIDE

for the

LOCAL SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR

PROJECT

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ADOPTION GUIDE

for

PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

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Berrien County Public Schools

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FOREWORD

You, the reader this document intends to address, are a public school administrator. You probably received your educational degrees and certificates by attending a traditional series of classroom courses in some college campus Education Department. You were probably once a teacher yourself, having been trained as a teacher by taking about 35 hours on-campus education credit, plus doing a quarter of student teaching.

If the "probables" mentioned above approximate your own background, then you probably didn't know much about being a teacher when you got your first teaching job. Furthermore, you probably didn't know much about your administrative job when you first assumed it. As either teacher or administrator, how many traditional on-campus education courses have you had that made a significant impact in your on-the-job performance?

Education is perhaps the only profession steeped in a history void of significant internship. (The lack of duration or serious responsibility assigned to student teaching makes that role invalid as significant internship.) How many physician's who have never seen a thermometer or held a stethoscope do we unleash on an unsuspecting world? Compare this with how many teachers we professionally certify who have never filled out a register, coped with an irate parent, diagnosed a learning disability, or salved a child's emotional upheaval.

Too long our teacher training procedures have followed the often faulty Aristotelian logic of theorizing away the hours with little regard

to the pragmatic applications actually needed on the job. Too many of us have fallen into the rather meaningless ritual of returning for college credits, with benefits reflected in higher degrees and certificates and salaries. We have been conditioned not to expect it, so we seldom think of additional credits in terms of improved job performance.

Since this document is being written by a public school administrator, for public school administrators, it is rather natural and easy for the language to be biased against the college role in teacher training. We amuse ourselves with wry smiles about the college professor who lectures on the evils of lecturing. We lift our brows in remembrance of the education instructor who always spoke of children "learning by doing" as we sat hour after hour in straight rows listening to him. We know that teachers usually teach in imitation of the way they were taught. Would you recommend that your teachers imititate their education professors?

Let's not get smug, however. The issue we are dealing with is one of those notorious swords with two edges. How is it that we energetic and idealistic young teachers so often grow up and turn into stodgy and conservative administrators with nothing but budget on the brain? Teacher growth and training through staff development is our responsibility, and it is a rather poor job we have done. When the colleges do produce that rare young gem of a teacher, we make short work of stifling her creativity. Our inservice programs are gorgeous--herding tired, after-hour teachers into an auditorium to hear a bone jarring lecture by a great consultant. Is that our idea of how to improve teachers' classroom performance?

The whole process begins to hint and nudge at the need for change. This ESEA Title III funded project is a modest proposal of humble origin. It suggests an alliance between a public school system and a teacher train-

ing institution in the hope that both can work together to mend their ways. It proposes that generic competencies be developed so that we know what skills ought to be cultivated in our teachers. Finally, it intends that much of the teacher training be done in field, on the job, where most real job skills are learned.

I

WHY SHOULD A PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM BE INTERESTED IN PROJECT CLASS ACTIVITIES?

Any new undertaking by a school system, especially one that necessitates a change in proceo're, is usually accompanied by a little pain. Many staff members reject change, and innovations cost the investment of finances as well as personnel time. If an educational procedure is to be adopted, it should hold the promise of benefits great enough to offset the costs involved.

Project CLASS provides a method whereby the public school system has direct input into the type of training offered to its staff. The public school system is the purchaser of the teachers' services, yet traditionally the public school system has had little input into the type training provided the teachers. In Project CLASS this situation is reversed, and the public school system specifies the type of training to be offered its teachers.

The processes and procedures of Project CLASS lend themselves to staff development work whether or not college credit is involved. Since the foundation of the project is built upon infield work, a local supervisor may fill the role of the college instructor. In this fashion Project CLASS may be adapted for an in-house staff development plan, for a contractual relationship with a college, or for both. In either case, the school system designs the teacher training program and reaps the benefits of improved teacher performance.

In Project CLASS the teacher training program is designed and conducted specifically to address local system needs. Teacher

competencies are deliberately designed to meet needs reflected in a local needs assessment. Therefore, the operation of CLASS activities is contingent upon the local system performing a thorough needs assessment. Frequently a local system will not have its needs listed in cogent language. The process of conducting a needs assessment helps a local system create a more precise definition of school needs and resources.

The composite of trends in the state of Georgia is towards in-field, competency based education. Therefore, this project is totally compatible with the directions being established by the Georgia State Department of Education. These developing trends are intended to bring greater professionalism to education. The total teacher training process, hopefully, will incorporate more professional internship comparable to what is currently experienced by doctors, lawyers, and others.

Colleges and universities are irrevocably involved in the teacher training process. Their contractual relationship in CLASS activities will likely result in changes in undergraduate teacher training procedures. In effect, this is a prediction that the process of osmosis will apply and colleges will revise their teacher training programs in order to produce better first year teachers.

A local system may expect both short and long range benefits from this program. In brief, these benefits are as follows:

1. Currently employed teachers will become better teachers. Their areas of weakness will be strengthened, and their areas of competence will be developed to meet the specific needs of the local system.

2. Total system inservice will become better organized, directed toward specified goals, with more efficient utilization of personnel and resources. This will eliminate a series of haphazard inservice days which do not compliment each other or address major system objectives.

3. As cooperating colleges upgrade their teacher preparation programs, the system will receive better first year teachers.

II

WHY SHOULD PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE IN CLASS ACTIVITIES?

As designed in Berrien County, Project CLASS is not a mandatory program. Teachers participate, to whatever degree, on a strictly voluntary basis. Worthy of note is that in Berrien County approximately 60% have chosen to participate. This percentage is far greater than ever occurred under the traditional approach where teachers had to return to the college campus to acquire additional credits. This seems to indicate a strong willingness on the part of teachers to have constant sharing and feedback sessions with their colleagues. Either with a college professor or a local supervisor, the teacher has the benefit of a professional consultant within her classroom. The use of training modules, combined with guidance from peers and supervisors, enables the participating teacher to apply her training to realistic, everyday problems.

In addition to college and staff development credits earned, a significant factor for teachers is their degree of job satisfaction. Project CLASS directly addresses itself to the task of improving teaching competence in the classroom. According to the teacher's responses, they feel a greater degree of job satisfaction as they detect improvement in their teaching competencies.

Teachers might also be motivated by their savings in time, money, and travel. Since the teacher does not travel extensively to the college campus, this time and expense is saved. Additional time is saved because part of the professor contact time occurs during the regular school day, thereby eliminating many of the hours that would be spent in on-campus classes.

The teacher's study and preparation time is largely self-directed, independent study, affording her great flexibility in how and when she does her studying.

III

ATTITUDE FOR CHANGE

Prior to engaging in the CLASS approach, some central office staff members should have a job description denoting adequate time and authority to be charged with leading local teacher training and staff development. This role could be assumed by the superintendent, or assigned to the curriculum director or any central office person with system-wide contact. The crucial element is that the designated person clearly has the time and authority to lead the program. In most school systems, job descriptions for existing personnel may be altered to encompass this task. However, it must be acknowledged that in some systems the job may be too burdensome to be assumed by existing staff. In such cases the cost effectiveness will be affected by the need to hire a staff development director. Whether the job is assigned to a new person or to one already on the staff, the staff development director should be a knowledgeable and gregarious person capable of affecting change.

The adoption of Project CLASS will likely be successful if the school system has an attitude ready and conducive to change. The attitude might be the result of internal motivations of professional staff who recognize weaknesses in traditional teacher training procedures. Likewise, the internal motivation could result from the knowledge that state and national trends are moving toward teacher training procedures similar to CLASS.

If the internal motivation is weak or lacking, the system administration must assume the task of selling the idea. This external motivation may be contingent upon the persuasiveness of the staff development director.

In any case it is suggested that participation in CLASS not be handled as a mandated approach by the local administration. If the program is as good as it is propounded to be, teachers and administrators will embrace it of their own volition.

IV

CONDUCTING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The operation of CLASS involves developing teacher skills which directly address local system needs. Obviously a needs assessment must be conducted in order to list, in ranked order, local system needs.* Most systems are familiar with the procedures for conducting a needs assessment, so this document does not purport to outline a needs assessment process. However, a few pertinent suggestions follow:

1. A needs assessment should be a committee operation involving parents, students, teachers, administrators, and community leaders.

2. Committee meetings should be scheduled and publicized.

3. The committee should be given sample needs as a beginning point, as it is difficult for a committee to start from scratch and be meaningfully creative.

4. Any final listing or ranking of needs should reflect the feelings of the school personnel plus a cross section of the sentiments of the community.

5. In order to be workable, a list should be limited to 10-20 identified needs.

6. Of major significance but often overlooked in a needs assessment is the fact that needs should be realistic and within the realm of some available resources. For example, if a system has exhausted its capital outlay resources, it would not be realistic to have a high priority need listed as building all new school facilities.

7. In addition to identifying needs which can be met by available resources, an implementation code should be assigned to the identified needs in order to reflect which needs can be addressed by CLASS.

*An adequate guideline for reference during the needs assessment process is the Needs Assessment Package, Division of Program and Staff Development, Georgia Department of Education, 1974.

As a staff development program, CLASS is one resource which can help meet identified needs. One cannot assume, however, that a staff development program can address every valid need. Therefore, an implementation code should reflect the degree of CLASS applicability to each need.

Following the listing of a ranked set of system needs, the next major step is the establishing of a local list of competencies and indicators to address the identified needs. This activity, like the needs assessment, would properly be coordinated by the local staff development director. The writing of competencies and indicators is a rather technical matter, and there is little need for community involvement. However, the staff development director would wisely maintain committee input from teachers, principals, and any state or college consultants with whom he might be working.

V

ESTABLISHING COMPETENCIES AND INDICATORS

Project CLASS presumes that each system will need its own list of generic competencies. Nevertheless, there is obviously a tremendous similarity among the competencies needed by all systems. Since a generic competency is a skill assumed universally important to teachers, some would argue that one list of competencies is as good as the next. Generic competencies have been prolifically produced by state departments, colleges, and school systems. (See the Appendix of the Project CLASS Handbook of Guidelines for the Instructional Sequence for a copy of competencies, indicators, and enablers developed by CLASS.)

On this basis many systems may elect not to re-invent the wheel, but to accept, adapt, or revise existing lists. The important factor is that the competencies and indicators be acceptable to the local system and judged as appropriate to meet locally identified needs.

The actual process of writing competencies, or of adapting them, is rather technical. Once a needs assessment, with community involvement, has been completed, there is little need for lay citizens to be involved in the writing of competencies. Principals and teachers, however, should be represented on a committee, led by the staff development coordinator which will design the phraseology of local competencies.

The language and wording of written competencies is crucial, and care must be taken to avoid ambiguities which could lead to various interpretations of exactly what the competencies mean. Likewise, competency indicators should reflect specifically observable criteria by which it can

be seen that competence is being demonstrated.

In a series of afternoon meetings, to run no longer than two weeks, the staff development coordinator and his committee should be able to generate a local list of competencies and indicators. Time during these meetings will be spent reviewing competency lists created elsewhere, selecting competencies and indicators which seem appropriate to the local system, and carefully devising the language of the competencies and indicators as they are to be used by the local system.

VI

PROVIDING NECESSARY STAFF AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

One of the troublesome aspects of adopting CLASS is determining the cost. An adopting system must logically determine if it has the staff and financial resources necessary to invest in CLASS. This easily could be a "yes" or "no" decision were 't not for the numerous variables which exist among systems. Some systems have many central office staff members with work loads less than burdensome. Other systems have a few central office people already working under heavy schedules, and an addition or re-assignment of duties would be intolerable. Colleges with which a system may contract will have different fees, and differing amounts of tuition will have to be paid to justify a college professor's time in the local system. Some training materials will have to be purchased, and a tremendous range in cost can be found here. A learning activity may involve an individual assignment at no cost, a small booklet at 35 cents, or a very sophisticated media package at $2,000. The range is broad, and the degree of investment is the choice of the system.

A local system could conceivably utilize the instructional sequence of this project as an in-house staff development approach which would cost no additional money. This presupposes that the local system possesses central office personnel who have the time and talent to conduct staff development training sessions. It also presumes that learning activities will consist largely of individual assignments with a negligible number of prepared modules being bought.

While specifically budgeted financial support likely will be necessary, few systems should find it necessary to employ additional staff. Personnel directors, department chairman, and area supervisors are examples of positions which often have job assignments dealing with staff development, inservice education or staff development work. Therefore, the adoption of CLASS may involve the revision of a current job assignment, but it should not necessitate the hiring of additional staff.

The cost analysis of this project will properly reflect alternatives based on the numerous variables previously cited. Likewise, the cost analysis will attempt to reflect minimum costs depending upon the manner in which CLASS is adopted. Cost analysis figures will reflect cost per cluster of 10 teachers, so an adopting system should be able to transpose potential costs to the number of participating teachers expected. No costs will be shown for additional personnel, as this is not expected to be a typical expense. Some of the items which may incur costs are itemized below.

1. Materials and training modules must be provided for the competency areas in which teachers will be working. CLASS is not predicated on any one method of prescribed study, as a module is defined as "any learning activity." Therefore, teachers may conduct experiments, go on field trips, use library resources, read professional journals, or engage in any such individually assigned learning activities which involve no direct cost. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to expect that some modular packages or special training materials will have to be purchased.

   As previously stated, any adopting system may exercise tremendous flexibility in determining the amount of money spent to purchase materials. Whatever range is selected, these costs should be viewed

as initial start-up costs. Training materials are viewed as basically nonconsumable, and once purchased the annual operational cost to maintain them is negligible.

2. Each participating teacher will probably need about three days released time per year, hence the cost for substitute teachers. Most CLASS activities can be conducted during after school meetings, pre and post school weeks, or scheduled inservice days. However, the need for teacher time on CLASS activities will not always conveniently arrive on these scheduled days. Teachers may need time to attend orientation sessions, consultant sessions, or inservice seminars. Released time also may be needed for a field trip or a program visitation in another school system, and such time may have to be provided through the payment of a substitute teacher.

   As explained in the Instructional Sequence, CLASS is postulated on extensive use of peers--participating teachers sharing work and ideas, observing in each other's classroom, providing feedback to each other, and being of general assistance to each other. Daily schedules of participating teachers must be sufficiently flexible to allow each teacher approximately 30 minutes per week to observe in a peer teacher's room. Typically this will not be a problem, but some teachers' schedules may be so tight that released time is necessary. In such cases a floating substitute teacher will have to supervise the teacher's class while she observes a peer teacher.

3. When CLASS teachers are participating for college credit, it is necessary that a cooperating college provide a professor in the local system. Depending upon the requirements of the cooperating college, tuition paid by teachers seeking college credit may be inadequate to generate the college professor's time. For example,

a professor may be able to properly train and supervise no more than ten teachers in a competency based field setting. If tuition per course is $75.00 then the ten teachers' tuition would product $750.00. The college budget, however, might require additional monies before it can designate a professor to conduct an infield course. In such a case, the local system would pay $25.00 per teacher or $250.00 per cluster of ten teachers.

4. There are two additional cost categories which are not mandatory, but might be viewed as "necessary luxuries." These are travel funds for teachers to visit outstanding programs in other school systems, and fees for workshops to be conducted by particularly qualified consultants. The experience of staff development activities in Berrien County has shown that these learning activities are some of the most meaningful that can be conducted for teachers. A teacher who can have hands-on experience with what others can and are doing is more likely to have a carry over of that learning into her own classroom performance.

In order to determine funding sources for payment of CLASS expenses, each system will need to examine the internal system budget. None of the costs are of much magnitude, and should be within the scope of the typical school budget. In addition to local funds within the general school budget, a local system should logically consider available funds through Title IV Adoption/Adaptation Grants. These are funds which every system in Georgia either receives or is eligible to apply. Within the funding range of these sources, the relatively minor costs incurred because of CLASS adoption should be covered.

VII

SUGGESTED TIME LINE FOR ACTIVITIES, PERSONNEL, AND INCURRED COSTS

The following chart represents a recommended time line, with accompanying activities, personnel, and minimum costs. The chart does not include payment to a college for professor time, but if the system chooses to pursue college credit for its teachers then this cost must be kept in mind. (Estimated $250.00 per 10 teachers per quarter.) Any costs paid to a college would be an out-going cost for each operational year. Excluding college payments, operational costs for the program after the first year would be negligible, probably $200.00 per year to update training materials, and an additional $200.00 per ten teachers for occasional released time. The chart also does not show any costs for developing or applying evaluation instruments. It is assumed that an adoption of CLASS would include adoption of its teacher assessment instruments and procedures. The state testing program will suffice to measure changes in student achievement.

VII

COMPETENCY BASED STAFF DEVELOPMENT

FIRST YEAR "START - UP" COST
(August - May)

ACTIVITY	PERSONNEL	TIME	COST
1. Comprehensive systemwide needs assessment	Staff development coordinator, principals, teachers, parents, community representatives, students	August--Two weeks	Inkind
2. Writing competencies and indicators reflecting needs (Workshop setting)	Staff development coordinator, teachers, principals, consultant	September--Two weeks	Staff development coordinator time Inkind Consultant (2 days)* $200.00 Consultant travel * $100.00 Teacher released time $400.00
3. Review and revise competencies and indicators - Rank list by county (system) teachers	Staff development coordinator, teachers, principals	September--One week October--	Staff development coordinator Inkind
4. Purchase, produce, adopt training activities to teach skills in competency areas (Modules, books, films, etc.)	Staff development coordinator, teachers, principals	September--Four weeks October--	Staff development coordinator Inkind Materials $30-$50/teacher 10 teachers $500.00 20 teachers $800.00 30 teachers $1,000.00
5. Cross-reference training materials with competencies and indicators	Staff development coordinator	November--Two weeks	Staff development coordinator Inkind

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ACTIVITY	PERSONNEL	TIME	COST
6. Prepare orientation materials-explanation of staff development program, credits, peer panel, peer observation cycle	Staff development coordinator	November--One week	Staff development coordinator Inkind Consultant $200.00 Consultant Travel $100.00
7. Orientation workshop	Staff development coordinator, consultant, principals, teachers	November--Two days	Staff development coordinator Inkind Consultant (2 days) $200.00 Consultant Travel $100.00
8. Develop baseline competency checklist to measure teaching skills present in existing staff (This step may be omitted if directly adopted from CLASS)	Staff development coordinator, consultant, principals	December--Two weeks	Released time per ten teachers $400.00 Staff development coordinator Inkind Consultant (3 days) $300.00 Consultant Travel $150.00
9. Gather baseline competency data	Staff development coordinator, principals, peer panels	January--One week	Staff Development coordinator Inkind

ACTIVITY	PERSONNEL	TIME	COST
10. Implement classroom observations, training session, peer panels (see Instructional Sequence Manual for implementation details)	Staff development coordinator, principals, peer panel	January--Five months May	Staff development coordinator Inkind four observations per quarter @ 30 minutes Four feedback sessions per quarter @ 30 minutes Ten teachers
	<u>Staff development only</u>		Total minimum cost $2,650.00 (first year only)
	To add college professor and college credit for participants	$250.00 per ten teachers for three quarters	750.00 annual cost
	Total when college credit involved		$3,400.00

* Practically all consultant time and travel expenses could be provided by the 1977-78 Project CLASS dissemination grant. Therefore, adopting systems or CESA's would not be responsible for such costs.